



Trail Talk

Mission Trails Regional Park Trail Guide Program

Trail Talk Volume 14, Issue 7

New Names for Old Friends by Fred Kramer, Trail Guide

We all know that some plant species have several common names, and separate plant species can share the same common name. So, we've been taught that the scientific name is the way to unambiguously refer to a plant. However, recent molecular studies on plants have resulted in taxonomic changes and new

scientific names (or families) for some plants.

These changes are intended to create monophyletic groupings; think of a group as a family or genus, but there are others. All individuals in a monophyletic group have common ancestors, and the group contains all their descendants. While

the research is complex, we are lucky to have Dr. Jon Rebman, Curator of Botany at the San Diego Natural History Museum, and Dr. Mike Simpson, Biology Professor at SDSU, reviewing the literature and making informed decisions about the classification of our local flora.

(Continued on page 2)

Common Name	Old		New	
	Family	Scientific Name	Family	Scientific Name
San Diego Sunflower	Asteraceae (Sunflower)	<i>Viguiera laciniata</i>	Asteraceae (Sunflower)	<i>Bahiopsis laciniata</i>
Monkey Flower	Scrophulariaceae (Figwort)	<i>Mimulus aurantiacus</i>	Phrymaceae (Hopseed)	<i>Mimulus aurantiacus</i>
Blue Elderberry	Caprifoliaceae (Honeysuckle)	<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>	Adoxaceae (Adoxa)	<i>Sambucus nigra</i> ssp. <i>caerulea</i>
Chaparral Candle	Agaveaceae (Agave)	<i>Yucca whipplei</i>	Agaveaceae (Agave)	<i>Hesperoyucca whipplei</i>
Crown Daisy	Asteraceae (Sunflower)	<i>Chrysanthemum coronarium</i>	Asteraceae (Sunflower)	<i>Glebionis coronaria</i>
Canchalagua	Gentianaceae (Gentian)	<i>Centaurium venustum</i>	Gentianaceae (Gentian)	<i>Zeltnera venusta</i>
California Everlasting	Asteraceae (Sunflower)	<i>Gnaphalium californicum</i>	Asteraceae (Sunflower)	<i>Pseudognaphalium californicum</i>
Bicolor Cudweed	Asteraceae (Sunflower)	<i>Gnaphalium bicolor</i>	Asteraceae (Sunflower)	<i>Pseudognaphalium biolettii</i>
Purple Owl's-Clover	Scrophulariaceae (Figwort)	<i>Castilleja exserta</i> spp. <i>exserta</i>	Orobanchaceae (Broom-Rape)	<i>Castilleja exserta</i> spp. <i>exserta</i>
Woolly Indian Paintbrush	Scrophulariaceae (Figwort)	<i>Castilleja foliolosa</i>	Orobanchaceae (Broom-Rape)	<i>Castilleja foliolosa</i>
Nuttall's Snapdragon	Scrophulariaceae (Figwort)	<i>Antirrhinum nuttallianum</i> ssp. <i>nuttallianum</i>	Plantaginaceae (Plantain)	<i>Antirrhinum nuttallianum</i> ssp. <i>nuttallianum</i>
Chinese Houses	Scrophulariaceae (Figwort)	<i>Collinsia heterophylla</i>	Plantaginaceae (Plantain)	<i>Collinsia heterophylla</i>
Climbing Bush Penstemon	Scrophulariaceae (Figwort)	<i>Keckiella cordifolia</i>	Plantaginaceae (Plantain)	<i>Keckiella cordifolia</i>

In this Issue...

- New Names, Old Friends—Page 1
- Out With the Old—Page 2
- Trail Guide Trek—Page 3
- Western Whiptail—Page 4

Writers wanted...

- Have an interesting story or photo you'd like to share with other Trail Guides? Send them to 'Trail Talk' editor Millie Basden at trailtalkeditor@yahoo.com.

Speakers Needed...

- Have you heard an interesting speaker or know an interesting topic that would be appropriate for one of our monthly meetings? If so, please send your ideas to Brian or Ondina Moehl.



Next Trail Guide
Monthly Meeting:

Wednesday,

July 14th

6:30 pm—

Visitor Center
Classroom

Monthly Meeting Minutes—June 9, 2010

There were 33 Trail Guides and Ranger Heidi in attendance.

Fred's number for June was 73. The answer in the form of a question is "How many bird nest boxes are being monitored in Mission Trails this nesting season?" This number was taken from the nest box article by Richard Griebel in the June issue of *Trail Talk*.

Fred reminded Trail Guides to sign up for walks and record the number of visitors and some interesting observations from the walk, including how visitors learned about the walk. Fred encouraged all Trail Guides leading a walk to enter their comments and sign their names after the entries. Fred mentioned that special walks are added to the schedule all the time, so Trail Guides should check the web site regularly.

Fred announced the prize winners for the best walk write-up in May: Chris Axtmann and Nancy Conyers for their special walk on May 11.

Fred congratulated Wendy Esterly for winning the "People's Choice" Award at the recent photo contest.

Special walks are added to the schedule all the time, so Trail Guides should check the website regularly.

Fred asked for volunteers to do the kiosk display for July–September and later ones. Tim West volunteered to do that display. Lilian Cooper volunteered for the October–December one.

Fred mentioned that the discovery tables program was just about ready to get started. He asked for volunteers to sign up for discovery table topics and give a preview at a Trail Guide meeting. Chris Axtmann demonstrated her "Birds and Beaks, What

Do They Eat" discovery table.

Ranger Heidi reported that there would not be an immediate replacement for Ranger Tom Miller, who recently retired. The campground has new campground hosts.

John Hopper announced the upcoming trek to Oakoasis on Saturday, June 12. The hike will be followed by a picnic lunch at Stelzer Park.

Program was a slide presentation by Bill Howell titled "Infrequent Flora of MTRP."

Upcoming Events

Wildlife Tracking Walk with Mike Gibbs, Saturday, July 3, 8:30–10:30 a.m. Meet in front of the Visitor Center.

The next meeting is July 14, 2010, 6:30 p.m. in the Visitor Center classrooms. The program will be an outdoor activity.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda L. Kramer, Secretary

New Names, Old Friends

(Continued from page 1)

The practical impact of all this on us is that some of our familiar plants have new scientific names or have been put in different plant families. The table on page 1 lists some of these changes.

In addition, some plant families have been completely merged into others: the Dodder family (Cuscutaceae) into the Morning-Glory family (Convolvulaceae); the Milkweed family (Asclepiadaceae) into the Dogbane family (Apocynaceae); and the Goosefoot family (Chenopodiaceae) into the Amaranth

Out with the old...

Centaurium venustum
(canchalagua)

Is now

Zeltnera venusta

Photo by Fred Kramer



family (Amaranthaceae).

Stay tuned. I'm sure there are more changes in store for us in the future, and even these changes may be revised as further research is completed.

References:

Rebman, Jon P. & Michael G. Simpson (2006). *Checklist of the Vascular Plants of San Diego County*. 4th ed. San Diego Natural History Museum, San Diego, CA.

"Changes to the Checklist of the Vascular Plants of San Diego County, 4th Edition as of 4 January 2010." <http://www.sdnhm.org/research/botany/lists/ChangesJan2010.doc> (accessed 6/16/2010).

Out With the Old and In With the New? story and photo by Millie Basden, Trail Guide

Alexandre Viguier is out. A French physician and botanist, he died in 1867, but his name lived on and was connected to MTRP through the scientific name for San Diego Sunflower, *Viguiera laciniata*. It was hard to pronounce and even harder to spell that name, so I guess it's good riddance to Monsieur Viguier. But it is sad to lose our connection with a romantic Frenchman.

San Diego Sunflower now goes by the scientific name *Bahiopsis laciniata*. *Bahiopsis* is not very romantic. *Bahia* is (or was) a genus name and "opsis" is Greek for resembling. So San Diego Sunflower's new scientific name means

that it resembles the plants in the genus *Bahia*. You can find a number of plants in that genus, but I found only one that lives in California, *Bahia dissecta*, which grows in yellow pine forests at high elevation. Its flowers do resemble the flowers of San Diego Sunflower. But hold on, *Bahia dissecta* also got a name change. It is now in the genus *Amauriopsis*, which means it resembles the genus *Amauri*. It feels like I'm in a never-ending loop here, so I think I will quit while I am not too far behind.

The Centaur Chiron, who was part horse and part man, is also out. He



San Diego Sunflower

(Continued on page 3)

Trail Guide Trek to Oakoasis by Tim West and Betty Matthews, photos by Fred Kramer, Trail Guides

A handful of us met in the MTRP visitor center parking lot, with a little like-minded chat about hiking experiences that is always the joy of being with our fellow Trail Guides. Then we caravanned along Mission Gorge Road through Santee to the trailhead for Oakoasis, about four miles up Wildcat Canyon Road. We joined up with those who had gone there directly, and commenced our walk.

After Bill Howell's recent presentation of "Infrequent Flora," it was a great pleasure to have two experienced observers along. John Hopper led the walk, which is a 2.5 mile loop with a 300' gain/loss, while Fred Kramer followed up with confirmations whenever a plant's identity was in doubt. The authors' own checklist is certainly incomplete, but includes a teachable moment with the Poison Oak look-alike Three-leafed Sumac (also known as Basketbush or Skunkbush, *Rhus trilobata*); Tocalote (which Fred was able to distinguish from the similar Star Thistle); Wreath Plant (San Diego or Twiggy, possibly others; only the seeds differentiate them); Western Ragweed (bane of allergic hikers); Nettle (look, don't touch); Death Camas (similar to Star Lily, but what a difference in nomenclature; and quite infrequent – even John had only seen it once before); Yellow Rock Rose (like MTRP's pink variety, except in color and size); Caterpillar Phacelia in profusion (alongside Parry's Phacelia, found in MTRP's Oak Canyon); Wild Peony (past its bloom but recognizable by its distinctive leaves) and Heart-Leaf Penstemon (as infrequent *spellers*, the authors learned it means "five stamen"). And of course, not an Infrequent Flora this year, but such a joy to see in response to this Spring's rains: *Centaurium venustum* [now *Zeltnera venusta*], the Canchalagua.



The trail drops you into a vale that shows the park to be aptly named, if undercapitalized. A few scattered Engelmanns among the Coast Live Oak allows us to mention it as an example of the theme of "Infrequent Flora." A Red-Tailed Hawk presented itself at this point, though it is neither flora nor infrequent, as it stayed above us for a good deal of the walk. It was the only animal we saw that day. Even lizards were infrequent. This was the plants' day.

About halfway along, the trail offers a view of San Vicente Reservoir, and there are enough twists and turns to hide the scattered homes along the ridges. The Cedar Fire hit this site hard, but it is recovering. The last quarter of the trail dips into a riparian area, and it was sometimes muddy going, but pleasantly shaded after the sunny bluffs above the reservoir. A picnic at nearby Steltzer County Park topped off a very pleasant hike. Thanks to John for leading it, and to all who came along.

Out With the Old

(Continued from page 2)

was credited with discovering the medicinal uses of a plant in Greece that was called Centaury. He had a whole genus named after him. Canchalagua was known as *Centaurium venustum*, but now it is *Zeltnera venusta*. Canchalagua deserves the *venusta* part. It means charming or handsome. *Zeltnera* is based on the names of Louis and Nicole Zeltner who are Swiss botanists. They are at

least in part responsible for the re-naming of this genus because of their on-going field work with plants in what used to be the *Centaurium* genus. The United States Postal Service won't issue a stamp in honor of someone until they have been dead for ten years. Apparently you don't have to be dead at all to get a plant genus named after you.

I think California Everlasting and Bicolor Cudweed have been "dissed" with their genus name change. It suggests that they

are "posers." (If you don't understand what I am saying here, you have not recently raised a teenager.) These two were full-fledged members of the genus *Gnaphalium*. Now they are reduced to being members of the genus *Pseudognaphalium*. How will they hold their rayless heads up?

Charters, Michael L. "California Plant Names: Latin and Greek Meanings and Derivations." <http://calflora.net/botanicalnames/index.html>. Accessed on June 27, 2010.

What's Happening at the Park

Saturday, July 17...

Guided Bird Walk—Join Trail Guide Jeanne Raimond for an adventure in bird watching! This month: Lake Murray. Meet on the north side of the lake by Murray Park Dr. and Belle Glade Ave. Park in the dirt lot by the ball fields. 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Summer Twilight Walk—Our Trail Guide Summer Twilight Walks continue at the Kumeyaay Lake Campground entry station. Come and enjoy an evening walk in the park and learn what occurs during dusk and as the sun goes down 7:15 p.m.

Saturday, July 31...

Birding Basics—Resident birder Winona Sollock will teach 5 simple techniques for identifying birds at a glance. Bring binoculars and your field guide if you have them. 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m., Visitor Center.

Saturday, August 7...

Tracking Walk—Join MTRP Trail Guide and Tracking Team member Mike Gibbs and discover signs left behind by resident creatures. Meet at the Visitor Center, 8:30 a.m.

Friday, August 13...

Stars at Mission Trails—Join members of the San Diego Astronomy Association from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the Kumeyaay Lake Campground's Day Use Parking Lot. Telescopes available (weather permitting.)



If you can't do a walk you signed-up for, arrange for someone to take your place or let Fred or Ranger Heidi know you won't be there.



Western Whiptail Walking

By Millie Basden,
Trail Guide



Photo by Peter Thomas, Trail Guide

The size of the lizard scurrying ahead on the trail at Kumeyaay Lake first caught our attention. It was big, like an Alligator Lizard, but this lizard was tan with black spots arranged in longitudinal rows on its dorsal surface. We had to turn to our reptile field guide to identify this Western Whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris*). Also known as the Tiger Whiptail, it can be up to 5 inches long from vent to snout, and up to 13 inches overall. It occurs as far east as Texas and as far north as Oregon and Idaho, a much larger range than that of its close relative and fellow MTRP denizen, the Orange-throated Whiptail (*A. hyperthrus*). In California, there are three subspecies of Western Whiptail, which are difficult to differentiate by appearance, but which have distinct ranges. The Coastal Whiptail (*A. t. stejnegeri*) occurs in San Diego county, and may be found in chaparral, riparian, and woodland habitats. Whiptails were previously in the genus *Cnemidophorus*: both the new and the old genus names refer to the scales on the legs. Whiptails earned their common name because of their long, slender, whiplike tails.

Stebbin, Robert C. *Western Reptiles and Amphibians*. 3d Ed. Houghton Mifflin Company, 2003.

California Reptiles and Amphibians. www.californiaherps.com Accessed on May 22, 2010.

Mosquito is out,
it's the end of the day:
She's humming and hunting
her evening away.

Who knows why such hunger
arrives on such wings
at sundown?

I guess it's the nature of things.
- N. M. Boedecker, *Midsummer Night Itch*

Mission Trails Regional Park Trail Guide Program

President—Fred Kramer
VP (Programs)—Brian & Ondina Moehl
Secretary—Linda Kramer
Publicity Chair—Chris Axtmann
Ranger Liaison—Heidi Gutknecht
Training Program Director—Bill Howell
Trail Talk Editor—Millie Basden
Trail Talk Production—Tom Walters
Trail Talk Distribution—Ed Bailey
Trail Talk Photographer—Wendy Esterly



The Trail Guide Program is dedicated to provide the visiting public with education and understanding of the unique environmental and historical attributes of Mission Trails Regional Park. The Trail Guides supplement the Park Rangers in outreach programs to the public.
Contact Information:

MTRP Visitor Center—619-668-3281

Ranger Heidi Gutknecht—619-668-3279

Fred Kramer—fred.kramer@cox.net

Millie Basden—trailtalkeditor@yahoo.com

Tom Walters—twalters@ucsd.edu

Brian Moehl—bmoehl@att.net

Ondina Moehl—omoehl@hotmail.com